

PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN



10-11

PLAN FOR 2010-11

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT



# MINISTRY PLAN FOR 2010-11

## Statement from the Minister



I am pleased to present the Ministry of Environment's Plan for the upcoming year, which is in alignment with Government's direction for 2010-11.

Our Government is committed to protecting the legacy of Saskatchewan's diverse, healthy, and beautiful environment by ensuring that as we work to create economic activity and growth, we also enhance environmental sustainability.

I accept responsibility for furthering Government's commitments while ensuring the Ministry is managed with integrity and professionalism, with a commitment to Government's corporate values and principles. Examining programs and services to ensure the most effective and efficient delivery possible is a key priority for all ministries and an activity that will be reported on as results are achieved.

I will report on the progress made toward this Plan, within the financial parameters provided to my Ministry, in the Ministry's annual report.

*The Honourable Nancy Heppner  
Minister of Environment*

## Response to Government Direction

Ministry Plans for 2010-11 align with Government's **vision for a secure and prosperous Saskatchewan, leading the country in economic and population growth, while providing opportunity for a high quality of life for all.** Government's vision, goals, and priorities for the upcoming year are described in the *Government Direction for 2010-11: Balanced. Forward-Looking. Responsible.*

Government's Plan and Budget for 2010-11 are about finding balance: responsibly managing expenditures, ensuring a solid revenue base, minimizing debt levels, and ensuring everyone can benefit from the province's economic prosperity.

To maintain the province's economic momentum, steps need to be taken to slow the growth in Government expenditures. Direction has been provided to ministries to find ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Government's programs and services and to ensure the best use of public funds. Efforts will focus on responsible financial management and innovative solutions to improve services to the public while reducing Government's overall footprint.

Similar to the ministry plans presented last year, the Plan for 2010-11 communicates a high level framework for the Ministry's key activities and identifies how the Ministry works to support Government's goals and priorities.

## Mission Statement

The Ministry of Environment's mission is to protect the environment and promote sustainable use of natural resources to enhance economic and social benefits.

# Strategies and Actions

## Government Goal – Economic Growth

Sustain **Economic Growth** for the benefit of Saskatchewan people, ensuring the economy is ready for growth and positioning Saskatchewan to meet the challenges of economic and population growth and development.

### Strategy

**Deliver effective results-based environmental regulation**

### Key 2010-11 Actions

- Complete review of environmental and natural resources legislation.
- Implement program changes required by proclamation of *The Environmental Assessment Act*, *The Forest Resources Management Act*, and *The Environmental Management and Protection Act*.
- Continue consultations with targeted stakeholder groups such as business organizations, academics, environmental non-government organizations, municipal and industry representatives and with First Nations, on legislative amendments, and development of the Environmental Code.
- Implement new divisional and branch organizational structures including the Client Service Office, in support of the new environmental management model.
- Implement information technology (IT) initiatives to support the new environmental management model including streamlined external and internal access to information such as:
  - ~ implementing the application processing and permissions management system;
  - ~ upgrading the overall Environmental Management System; and,
  - ~ planning for the overarching initiative that provides the framework for managing the compliance assurance mandate within the Ministry's results-based regulatory business model.

## Strategy

**Manage sustainable use of natural resources to increase economic benefits**

## Key 2010-11 Actions

- Lead land use planning to inform development and resource allocation decisions that are supported by diverse stakeholders and user groups by:
  - ~ initiating a review of the Province's land use planning/stewardship policies;
  - ~ initiating development of an implementation plan for the Regional Environmental Study of the Great Sand Hills;
  - ~ developing modeling tools and sharing the information gathered to date with other ministries, First Nations, Métis, as well as users and interests towards the development of a Northwest Sustainable Development Strategy;
  - ~ initiating the final review of the Pinehouse Dipper and Fort à la Corne plans;
  - ~ submitting the Buffalo Pound plan for review and approval; and,
  - ~ ongoing implementation of the Pasquia Porcupine, Amisk-Atik, La Ronge, Misinipiy, Prince Albert Model Forest, Manitou Sand Hills, and Nisbet land use plans.
- Facilitate land acquisition by Treaty Land Entitlement First Nations.
- Continue to identify, protect, and manage sites within the provincial Representative Areas Network.
- Develop and implement an automated Crown Land Administration and Management System to manage, track, and map land use.
- Support Aboriginal participation in natural resource development such as encouraging several First Nations entities working with other assignees of the Prince Albert Forest Management Agreement to form a business partnership.
- Develop and implement a risk based, provincial Compliance Plan that supports the results-based regulatory framework and focuses compliance, assurance and monitoring on areas of highest priority within the Ministry mandate.
- Enhance the facilitation of orderly and sustainable industry growth in the oil/gas/mineral exploration sectors by on-line permitting, conducting environmental reviews, and approving surface access to mineral and petroleum projects where appropriate.
- Support forest industry revitalization by:
  - ~ utilizing new forest inventories to support reallocation of forest resources;
  - ~ collaborating with Energy and Resources to explore reconfiguring Forest Management Agreements and boundaries to support a redeveloped forest industry;
  - ~ analyzing forest inventories for biomass availability in support of the biofuel industry;
  - ~ protecting the commercial forest from insects and diseases; and,
  - ~ ensuring renewal of harvested areas within the provincial forests.
- Support natural resource based tourism by implementing an automated hunting and fishing license system.

## Government Goal – Security

**Secure** Saskatchewan as a safe place to live and raise a family where people are confident in their future, ensuring the people of Saskatchewan benefit from the growing economy.

### Strategy

**Prevent and reduce risks to the health of people and the environment**

### Key 2010-11 Actions

- Complete phase 2 of the aerial fleet renewal plan and construction of remaining fire observation towers and other infrastructure projects.
- Work with local governments, northern residents, and stakeholders and provide education and support to enable them to understand, and take responsibility to protect themselves from, the risks of wildfires.
- Work with federal and other provincial and territorial governments on advancing air quality management across the nation.
- Implement the Province's airshed management program and manage a regional air quality monitoring network in southeast Saskatchewan.
- Work with communities to ensure safe drinking water; water and wastewater infrastructure capacity and capability; and maintenance of high-level of drinking water quality standards compliance by:
  - ~ monitoring and following-up on drinking water quality testing results to ensure compliance with standards;
  - ~ working with affected communities to ensure the assessment of wastewater effluent is conducted in a timely manner;
  - ~ working with ministries and agencies to advance water and wastewater related infrastructure planning and improvements; and,
  - ~ working with waterworks owners to evaluate waterworks infrastructure through the second round of waterworks system assessments.
- Encourage the development or use of regional water or wastewater infrastructure to make more effective use of funding.
- Work with communities to achieve health and toxicity, radiological and pesticide related water quality standards to achieve December 2010 upgrade requirements as stated in *The Water Regulations*.
- Continue safe drinking water related programming delivery including water and wastewater system inspections; reviewing waterworks related projects; and, responding to drinking water related emergencies which may be a threat to public health.
- Expand solid waste management and recycling programs by implementing the provincial strategy for municipal solid waste management and a Multi-Material Recycling Program.
- Work with the Canadian Council of Ministers of Environment to research and develop innovative solutions to packaging of goods.
- Develop and implement a cumulative effects program to minimal risk exposure to multiple emission sources.
- Work with Corrections, Public Safety and Policing to manage the migration from the Fleetnet system to the public safety telecommunications system.

## Strategy

## Key 2010-11 Actions

**Maintain healthy air, land, water, and ecosystems that support native biological diversity**

- Monitor the new provincial fisheries management plan to ensure sustainable resources over the next decade.
- Implement an acid deposition management framework to manage the impacts of acid deposition.
- Maintain and provide environmental information to support sustainable development and use of natural resources by:
  - ~ in support of results-based regulations, conducting analysis to address needs and gaps in Information; Management/Information Technology (IM/IT) framework and establish a strategic IM plan data management standards; and,
  - ~ providing effective online interface with industry and other resources users, streamlining submission and approval processes.
- Conduct analysis to address needs and gaps in IM/IT framework to support integrated environmental monitoring.
- Oversee clean-up of priority contaminated sites by:
  - ~ continuing to pursue clean up of contaminated sites as they are identified; and,
  - ~ monitoring progress at facilities undergoing remediation including sites in Kamsack, River Landing, and Magnum Oil.
- Secure and eliminate public safety hazards at non-uranium abandoned mine sites.
- Develop and implement a new Biodiversity Action Plan framework that builds on the existing plans and programs and re-engages government partners and external stakeholders.

**Lead the government's response to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change**

- Implement the policy and regulatory framework to create the Office of Climate Change, the Saskatchewan Technology Fund, and the Climate Change Foundation to deliver the provincial climate change plan.
- Design and implement the provincial offset system to enable regulated emitters to meet their compliance obligations in a cost-effective manner, and to encourage non-regulated emitters to reduce emissions.
- Implement a provincial adaptation blueprint in partnership with other ministries, industry groups, and communities that support sustained economic growth through sectoral initiatives that address potential long-term impacts of climate change.

**Support the delivery of the Province's Go Green Plan**

- Administer the Go Green Fund to promote research and development of cost-effective environmental technologies and processes such as:
  - ~ carbon capture and storage;
  - ~ energy efficiency and conservation initiatives;
  - ~ water conservation measures;
  - ~ biodiversity conservation initiatives; and,
  - ~ public education and awareness.



## Government Goal – Promises

Keep Government's **Promises** and fulfill the commitments of the election, operating with integrity and transparency, accountable to the people of Saskatchewan.

### Strategy

### Key 2010-11 Actions

**Enhance co-operation among intergovernmental agencies in environmental and resource management**

- Minimize duplication and maximize federal/provincial co-operation to ensure the environment is protected by continuing effective agreements with agencies and by entering into new agreements with The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) and Fisheries and Oceans Canada by:
  - ~ seeking to maximize provincial regulation of uranium mining and milling under the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act* in Saskatchewan through an administrative agreement with CNSC; and,
  - ~ continuing discussions with Fisheries and Oceans Canada to complete and implement a Canada-Saskatchewan Fish Habitat Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to clarify respective roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication in management applications, streamline approval processes, and enhance sharing of information.

**Work co-operatively with and increase involvement of First Nations and Métis people in environmental and resource management**

- Develop a ministerial framework that facilitates the implementation of duty to consult, supports partnerships and relationships with First Nations and Métis people and communities, and respects rights of First Nations and Métis, including:
  - ~ working with First Nations and Métis Relations to establish and implement a framework policy statement for government;
  - ~ identifying strategic cross-ministry opportunities for capacity-development for First Nations and Métis;
  - ~ coordinating branch and program specific guidelines for First Nations and Métis consultation across the Ministry; and,
  - ~ evaluating policies that facilitate involvement in the environment assessment and other ministerial processes.

**Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ministry's programs and services so as to ensure the best use of public funds**

- Enhance a client focused culture that supports high quality service.
- In 2010-11, implement a human resource plan to align Ministry's workforce, culture and succession management to support the transition to results-based regulations.
- Implement a management practice of assessment and continuous improvement to ensure a robust, objective, and multi-year assessment function. In 2010-11 this includes:
  - ~ conducting a review of the fire management and forest protection program (focused on efficiencies achieved through changes to the fire observation system and aerial fleet renewals) and review of efficiencies expected to be achieved through the implementation of the Saskatchewan Environmental Code specific to aspects of the environmental protection program.

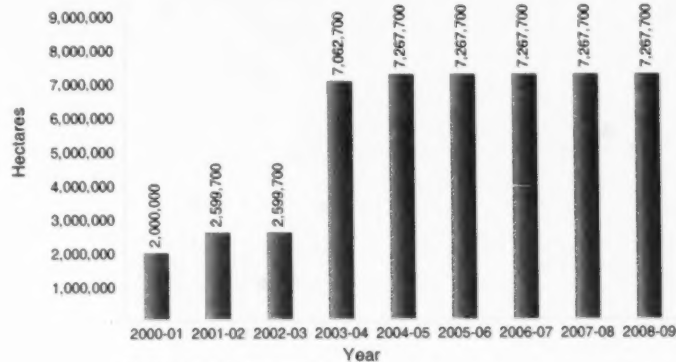


# Performance Measures

## Measure

**Number of hectares of Crown land under integrated land use plans (ILUP)**

## Baseline / Trend Line Information



Source: Ministry of Environment

### Measure Description

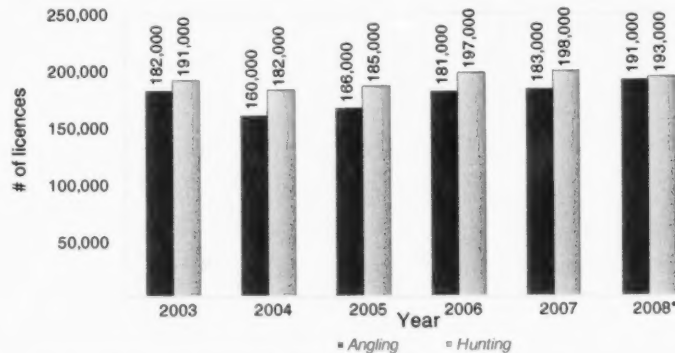
Integrated land use planning is an ecosystem-based tool that links the environment, community, and the economy in ways that help ensure the sustainability of resources for all. The completion of plans enables the Ministry to manage the subject land area with certainty as to acceptable activities and levels of protection and conservation; this activity aligns with the Ministry's strategy to manage sustainable use of natural resources to increase economic benefits. The unification of the varied interests through the ILUP process requires time, commitment, a high-level of participation, and financial resources but results in more efficient resource management decisions over the long-term. Any influences that adversely affect any of these four components will result in at least a degree of loss of control or influence over the measure.

The number of hectares of Crown land under integrated land use plans has remained at 7,267,700 hectares for the past six years and, while no new plans were approved in 2008-09, significant advancements were made including final drafts of the Misinipiy, Nisbet, and Buffalo Pound land use planning processes. There are more than 7 million additional hectares of Crown land involved in active land use planning processes and, over the next several years, the branch is targeting completion of the key integrated land use plans. As these land use plans are completed, the number of hectares under integrated land use plans will increase.

## Measure

### Number of hunting and angling licences sold

## Baseline / Trend Line Information



Source: Ministry of Environment, Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity Branch

\*Note: The hunting sales in the 2008-09 Annual Report were 181,000, which was based on a projection at the time of data collection.

### Measure Description

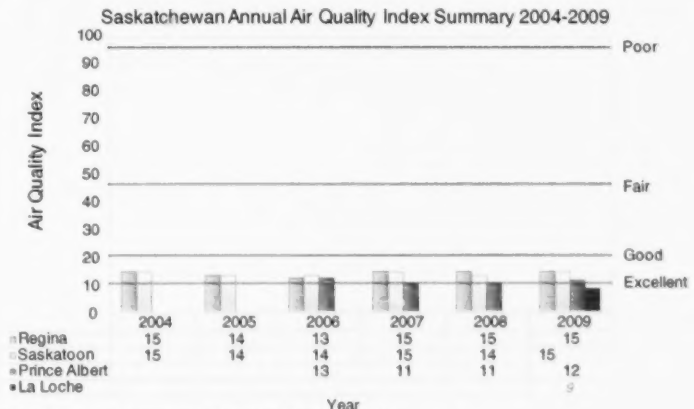
Hunting and angling are of social, cultural, and economic importance in the province. Licence sales are tracked annually and serve both as an indicator of short- and long-term interest in these activities and as an indication of the importance of hunting and fishing to the economic health of the province. Measuring the number of licences sold helps to determine the priority areas for population assessments and to manage competing interests of users. As such, this measure aligns with the Ministry's strategy to manage sustainable use of natural resources to increase economic benefits.

The Ministry has experienced high-levels of participation in angling and hunting activities by members of the public over the last number of years which supports continued focus on conservation and protection of our wildlife and fisheries resources through conservation and management planning. The increased angling licence sales in 2008 are consistent with the Ministry's long-term fisheries management plan to guide resource management allocation decision making. The drop in hunting license sales in 2008 is a product of the poor North American economy and fewer non-resident hunters traveling to Saskatchewan. This trend is cyclical, but does not reflect a decrease in resident hunter participation, which is actually on the rise and suggests there will be continued strong demand by resource users.

## Measure

## Baseline / Trend Line Information

### Air Quality Index



Source: Ministry of Environment, Technical Resources Unit  
(Also available online: <http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/airqualityindex>)

### Measure Description

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a communication tool designed to describe the general air quality in urban areas by transforming ambient measurements of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulates into a single number or descriptive term that represents the measured quality of the air. The index is also used to monitor long-term trends in air quality. Measuring and evaluating urban air quality is an important step in meeting the Ministry's objective of ensuring clean areas stay clean. Maintaining air quality is fully aligned with the Ministry's strategy to prevent and reduce risks to the health of people and the environment. This measure is essential in order to compare Saskatchewan to other jurisdictions in a simple and straightforward fashion. However it only measures ambient air at a point source, not for the overall population, so it is just an indicator of the air quality.

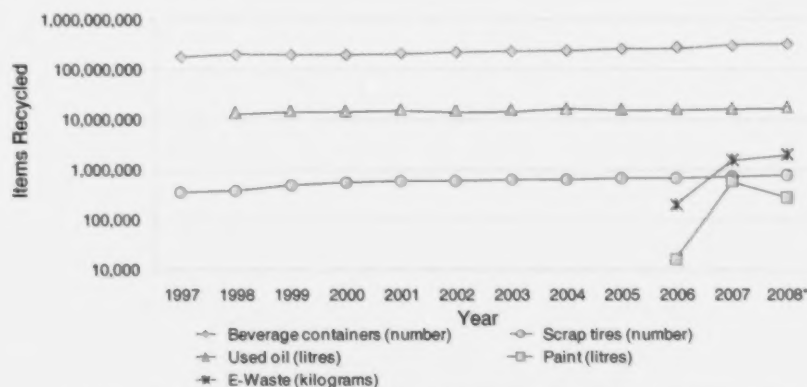
Saskatchewan's overall approach to managing air quality is through permits to operate issued pursuant to Saskatchewan's *Clean Air Act/Regulations* and *The Potash Refining Air Emissions Regulations*, the environmental assessment process, air quality monitoring, reporting, ambient air quality standards, air dispersion modeling, airshed management, compliance and enforcement, information, and research.

The Ministry of Environment has established air monitoring stations in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, La Loche, and Swift Current (AQI not determined at this site). The AQI rate for Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, and La Loche has consistently rated as excellent and there has been a relatively stable trend in this measure. The Ministry intends to continue using the AQI to rank the province's air quality so as not to jeopardize the health of people and the environment from potential degraded air quality events.

## Measure

## Baseline / Trend Line Information

### Recycling Rates



Sources: Third Party Organizations Annual Report, Saskatchewan Waste Electronic Equipment Program  
 \*Note: E-Waste for 2008 is estimated based on three quarters of data

### Measure Description

Recycling is an indicator of public commitment to waste minimization and indicates shared responsibility for environmental stewardship. The Ministry administers the enabling regulations for a number of third party stewardship programs. The recycling indicators report on the actions of the Ministry of Environment in addressing strategies of preventing and reducing risks to the health of people and the environment and key actions related to expanding solid waste management and recycling programs. Any limitations on the data are related to reporting accuracy of stewardship organizations which operate the recycling programs.

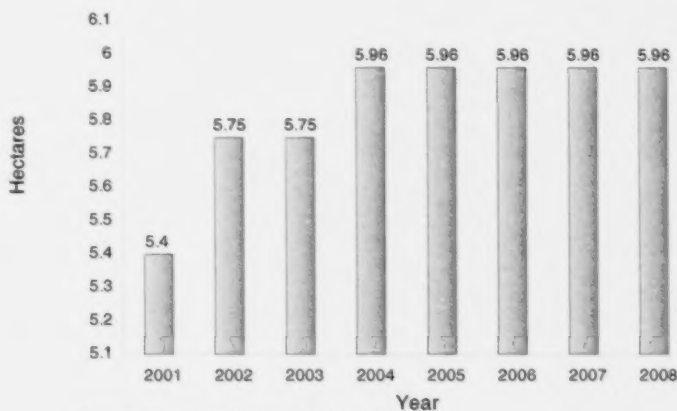
Market conditions and public commitment determine the recycling rates; however, in general, the indicator shows that Saskatchewan benefits from good recycling rates and practices. Over 85 per cent of all deposit-paid, ready-to-serve beverage containers sold in Saskatchewan are recycled, which makes this the highest return rate of all beverage container programs in Canada. The Ministry continues to promote recycling within the province as a means to increase the recycling rates. The expansion of waste electronic products eligible for collection and recycling through the *Saskatchewan Waste Electronic Equipment Regulations* as well as the Ministry's efforts to develop a Multi-Material Recycling Program are expected to increase recycling rates in the future.

With the exception of waste paint, recycling rates for recycling of beverage containers show a steady to slightly increasing rate of the number or volume of material recycled. For example, the number of beverage containers recycled between 2007 and 2008 increased by approximately two per cent (2%), which indicates the success of provincial recycling rates in addressing ongoing recovery of these materials.

## Measure

## Baseline / Trend Line Information

### Number of hectares in the Representative Areas Network



Source: Ministry of Environment, Land Branch

### Measure Description

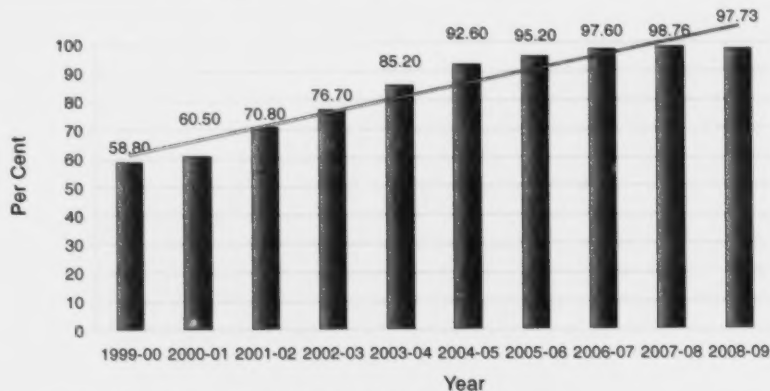
The Representative Areas Network (RAN) is intended to conserve representative and unique landscapes throughout the 11 ecoregions of the province. The RAN includes designated Crown lands that have been given a level of protection by virtue of legislation and private lands that are managed for biodiversity by agreement. The measure of the number of hectares in the RAN is an indicator of the Province's commitment to supporting the protection and retention of native habitat and of long-term ecological health and aligns with the strategy of managing sustainable use of natural resources to increase economic benefits. Establishing protected areas is seen in the international science community as a 'natural solution' and a powerful tool against carbon emissions and possibly climate change. There are challenges in adding significant number of hectares to the RAN. In agricultural portions of the province, the vast majority of land is privately held and additions to the RAN are achieved in small quantities while, in northern Saskatchewan, even though Crown land dominates, many interests must be considered and weighed to achieve a balance between conservation and economic development.

The number of hectares in the Representative Areas Network remains unchanged for 2009-10 with no new areas being added to the network; however, a number of sites have been identified within integrated land use plans and, as these land use plans are approved and recommendations for designation of proposed representative areas are implemented, hectares will be added.

## Measure

### Drinking Water Quality Standards Compliance

## Baseline / Trend Line Information



Source: Ministry of Environment, Municipal Branch; SEEMS Database

### Measure Description

The drinking water quality compliance indicator is an average of compliance with disinfection and bacteriological standards, both of which measure compliance with drinking water quality standards. This indicator looks at both the results of bacteriological water quality monitoring and the level of disinfectant present in drinking water and is a good predictor of the safety of drinking water. Compliance with drinking water quality standards for disinfection and bacteriological quality is important as contamination in water supplies can result in significant illness within a short period of time and proper disinfection of drinking water is an important way to ensure safe drinking water and prevent the outbreak of waterborne diseases. The indicator reports on the actions of the Ministry in addressing the strategy to prevent and reduce risks to the health of people and the environment and key actions related to ensuring safe and sustainable drinking water. The accuracy of this indicator is fully dependant on accurate testing and reporting by regulated waterworks operators.

The drinking water quality compliance indicator has been very good for the past few years and has remained relatively stable. The Ministry will continue to reinforce the need to comply with disinfection requirements and proper reporting of disinfection values in 2010-11 and beyond to ensure this measure remains at a high level. Ongoing inspection and education awareness initiatives with waterworks owners and operators are planned to sustain good performance in achieving water that is safe from bacteriological threats and meets disinfection standards.

## Measure

## Baseline / Trend Line Information

### Drinking Water Quality Satisfaction

| December<br>2001 | May 2003 | March 2005 | March 2006 | May 2007 | February<br>2008 | May 2009 |
|------------------|----------|------------|------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| 72%              | 87%      | 86%        | 87%        | 83%      | 87%              | 90%      |

Data Source: Government of Saskatchewan Survey Information

### Measure Description

The Drinking Water Quality Satisfaction indicator is based on the results of annual omnibus polling of Saskatchewan residents on their level of confidence in the quality of their drinking water supply. The measure is the per cent of survey respondents indicating that they are very or somewhat confident in the quality of their tap water. This indicator reflects upon the success of the Ministry in advancing safe drinking water at various public drinking water supplies (municipalities, pipelines, large commercial water systems) across the province. The indicator reports on the actions of the Ministry in addressing strategies of preventing and reducing risks to the health of people and the environment and key actions related to ensuring safe and sustainable drinking water. The accuracy of the indicator is limited only by the accuracy of polling methods.

The drinking water quality satisfaction indicator has been greater than 80 per cent since 2003. The Ministry's ongoing attention to actions such as consumer education efforts, waterworks inspections, implementation of water quality standards, water workshops, and consumer notification will help to maintain this high level of public confidence in the safety of drinking water in the future.



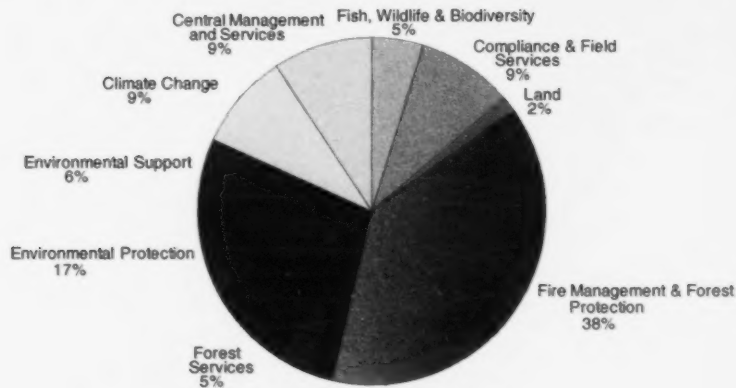
# Financial Summary

## Highlights of Appropriation and Expense 2010-11

| 2010-11 Estimates                        | (in thousands of dollars) |
|--|---------------------------|
| Central Management and Services          | 17,324                    |
| Environmental Support                    | 11,010                    |
| Environmental Protection                 | 31,221                    |
| Forest Services                          | 9,943                     |
| Fire Management and Forest Protection    | 71,331                    |
| Compliance and Field Services            | 16,585                    |
| Land                                     | 2,778                     |
| Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity          | 8,883                     |
| Climate Change                           | 16,773                    |
| <b>Ministry Operations Appropriation</b> | <b>185,848</b>            |
| Capital Asset Acquisitions               | (16,579)                  |
| Capital Asset Amortization               | 5,030                     |
| <b>Total Expense</b>                     | <b>174,299</b>            |
| <b>FTE Staff Complement</b>              | <b>998.4</b>              |

For more information, see the Budget Estimates at: <http://www.finance.gov.sk.ca/budget/2010-11>

**Ministry of Environment, Budget 2010-11**



# HIGHLIGHTS

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The following are key announcements being made in the 2010-11 Budget:

- \$6.7 million for the result-based environmental management model in 2010-11 will enable: establishment of highly qualified specialists for technical support; development of the Saskatchewan Environmental Code; evaluation and mapping of regulatory processes; implementation of the Ministry's overall organizational change including a new audit branch and a client services unit; legislative amendments; and, creation of an electronic information platform.
- \$15.3 million for Go Green funding will support research and demonstration projects that address greenhouse gas emission abatement technologies and adaptation planning; water conservation; biodiversity conservation; and, energy efficiency and conservation.
- The 2010-11 funding will support the delivery of the provincial climate change plan including: working with industry and the province's Crown corporations to meet the Province's target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent from current levels by 2020; development and administration of the provincial offset system; greenhouse gas emission measurement, reporting, and verification; establishment of the Technology Fund, Climate Change Foundation, and the Climate Change Advisory Council; and, delivery of public awareness and education initiatives.
- Funding will continue to support the beverage container collection and recycling program and will maintain the current service levels for the beverage program. The Government will implement a province-wide Multi-Material Recycling Program to enhance access to recycling for residents across Saskatchewan.
- Capital funding will support the transition to a new public safety telecommunications network and will continue to support the replacement of equipment and infrastructure necessary for fighting forest fires.

## For More Information

Please visit the Ministry's website at [www.environment.gov.sk.ca](http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca) for more information on the Ministry's programs and services, or call (306) 787-8567.

